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CHINA AND THE UNITED STATES

THE NEW CONGRESS AND THE NEW CHINA: AN AGENDA FOR ACTION

Remarks of Senator Mike Mansfield (D., Montana)

before the

Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Study

Washington, D. C.

Thursday, March 15, 1973

8:15 P. M.

With Peking as the epi-center, the pattern of international relationships in Asia has undergone a series of earthquakes. The repercussions have been deep and pervading. When a new structure of stability emerges in the Western Pacific, it will manifest far-reaching changes. The main factors of change are already evident and I should like to list them at the outset.

(1) The tragic U. S. involvement in the war in Indochina is, hopefully, at its tortured, dragged-out end. U. S. military power is moving off the Asian mainland.

(2) Whether the character of the People's Republic has changed or our perceptions of China have improved is moot;

the United States has elected, at last, to close out the undeclared war, the cold war, the proxy war, the peripheral war with the Chinese People's Republic. In turn, we have found the Chinese leadership in Peking most accommodating.

(3) In a period of spreading peace, Japan possesses the most dynamic economy in Asia. The Japanese have skirted the Taiwan quicksands and have come, instead, to terms with the new China. They are now embarked on a multi-directional diplomacy built on the base of a vast foreign trade. Japan moves still, with intense awareness of the United States, but no longer in the shadow of U. S. policy.

(4) To whatever depth the wedge has been driven between the Soviet Union and China, no signs point to imminent extraction; in the circumstances, Soviet policies which appear to be in a state of abeyance in Asia, remain uncertain and enigmatic.

An ancient Chinese proverb says that "a journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step." Actually it says a

"Journey of 333 1/3 miles." But with an ancient American tendency to overstate anything involving China, we have even managed to inflate its proverbs. In any event, the first step and several more have already been taken in Sino-U. S. reconciliation. China and the United States are now moving rapidly towards the normal relationships of peace. This change has been produced by the combined talents of the nation's political community, as typified by the President, and of the Academic community, as represented by Dr. Kissinger. Democrats can hardly ride the President's coattails on the China question, nor, for that matter, can other Republicans. Whether Johns Hopkins can claim a share of credit for Harvard's contribution, I leave to your judgment.

It will help to understand how far we have come in Sino-U. S. relations if we look for a moment at the old China policy which was washed away in the Chou-Nixon toasts in Peking last winter. That policy was one of boycott and ostracism and it can be said to have begun with the inauguration of the

People's Republic of China in Peking in 1949. At that time, we saw not the birth of new hope in China, but rather the dashing of our hopes for a durable peace after World War II. The new government was viewed as not Chinese at all, but rather as an alien outpost of a worldwide Communist conspiracy led by the Soviet Union. We told ourselves that it was bound to be short-lived, soon to be overthrown by the righteous wrath of the Chinese people.

This interpretation may seem somewhat incredible today. However, I can assure those of you who are too young to remember that it was the prevailing interpretation a quarter of a century ago. It was an interpretation spawned largely by the anxieties, fears and angers generated in the cataclysmic upheaval of the Chinese revolution.

In view of the distorted depiction of the new China in 1949 and the sense of betrayal to which it gave rise in this country, it is not surprising that American public life came to

be dominated by a nationwide witch-hunt. Everywhere the search went out for the culprits "who had lost China." Educators, politicians, journalists, ministers, bureaucrats, businessmen or whatever--none was exempt from the field-day of the ideological carpet-baggers. In the atmosphere of those times, rational discussion soon gave way to a massive bi-partisan denunciation of the new China. Indeed, Democrats vied with Republicans in expressing a hostile aversion to what had emerged in Peking.

The American mood in 1949 was one of fear, frustration and fury. Spearheaded by these emotions, it is little wonder that we moved, almost eagerly, into the devastating peripheral war with China in Korea. Simultaneously, our diplomacy plunged us into the middle of the Taiwan problem and opened the door to eventual direct military involvement in Indochina and Southeast Asia. Everywhere in Asia, "containment of China" was enshrined as a cardinal objective of our policies.

After the Korean truce and the Geneva Accords of 1954 the wings of a Sino-U. S. reconciliation beat feebly from time to time but never with sufficient strength to dispell a smoldering mutual resentment. For many years, Department of State representatives maintained intermittent contact with Chinese diplomats in Europe. At no time, however, did these meetings confront the major issues. While European and other nations were coming to terms with the People's Republic, the United States under successive Presidents, reaffirmed time and again that Taiwan was China. Insofar as this nation was concerned, Peking was then and forever consigned to international limbo.

The Executive Branch engineered and Congress financed a ring of military compacts around China's borders. Links in the chain were formed by SEATO and Mutual Defense treaties with the Republic of China on Taiwan, Japan and the Republic of Korea. With these treaties came a strengthening of the U. S. military base structure throughout Asia and the quasi-permanent

deployment of tens of thousands of U. S. troops to man the bases. Tens of billions of dollars poured forth for our forces in the Far East and for massive aid and thousands of advisors to allies, new and old.

A stringent boycott was clamped on all trade with the Chinese mainland. Cultural and other contacts were shut off. It became illegal to purchase even a pair of chopsticks in Hong Kong if they were fashioned in China, or to sell the Chinese a pair of shoe-laces, even by way of a U. S.-owned factory in Canada. As for our understanding of the new China, what we learned, we learned second-hand and more often than not through the distorting prisms of Taiwan and Hong Kong. An American newsman who had the temerity to journey to China in the face of an Executive Branch prohibition on all such travel was compelled, subsequently, to go to court to obtain a passport to ply his trade abroad.

It was almost as though we were determined to blot out of our ken the very existence of the Chinese mainland and

what was transpiring thereon. Even when serious difficulties emerged in Soviet-Chinese relations, we were at first incredulous and suspected a joint plot aimed at the "Free World."

It was only much later that we were prepared to acknowledge the reality and abandon the concept of a worldwide Communist monolith based on Moscow.

In doing so, however, we did not change our view of the government in Peking. We still saw the People's Republic as a reckless, belligerent and powerful Chinese dragon with its corralling as the end purpose of our Asian policies and programs. All the while, it is now apparent, the Chinese people were seeing themselves as a beleaguered, undeveloped country, beset on all sides by enemies who had been marshalled by the United States to undo the achievements of the Chinese revolution.¹

It is now known that during these years of ostracism, the Chinese stress was not on aggression beyond their borders, but on military defense of their own territory. It is now known, too, that the maximum emphasis of these years was given

to production for peaceful purposes. The Chinese were pre-occupied with feeding, clothing and sheltering three-quarters of a billion people and with developing a social and economic structure which would give durability to the ideology of Mao Tse-tung. In retrospect, it is clear that we expended billions in Asia to deter what we believed was an aggressive China at precisely the time when Chinese energies were being redirected away from militant revolution into militant social reconstruction.

The gash in our understanding was largely self-inflicted. To a large extent, as I have indicated, we cut ourselves off from what was happening inside China. The cost of this exercise in ostrichism is incalculable. It had much to do with leading more than two and a half million Americans into the military quagmires of the Asian mainland. Thirty-three thousand Americans never returned from the hills and valleys of Korea where many died in unnecessary conflict with vast Chinese

armies north of the 38th parallel. Another 46,000 Americans gave their lives in the paddies and jungles of Indochina. The \$150 billion, plus, cost of the Vietnamese war pales in comparison with the tragedy of devastated lives, of a shattered national unity and of the decline in the general sense of well-being of the nation.

Nevertheless, the dollar price of this misbegotten policy is not to be ignored. The price is now stated as upwards of \$150 billion for Indochina alone but the full costs of that tragic adventure will be borne by the American people well into the next century, with the present price-tag not doubling but tripling. The wastage stalks both our national and international footsteps. It casts reflections in the ever-rising prices at home and in the declining value of the dollar abroad. It has left us ill-prepared for the emerging challenges of a period of peace.

To be sure, the damage of two decades is done and cannot be undone. I have sketched this past of China policy,

not in recrimination; few of us who lived through the period are completely free of responsibility for the distortions. I have sketched it in some detail because an awareness of the soil in which the old policy was planted is necessary to the cultivation of a fruitful new policy with regard to China and, indeed, all of Asia.

As I have already noted, President Nixon's visit to China last year marked a turning point. The visit, properly, brought him public gratitude and acclaim. His greatest foreign-policy initiative has made possible the narrowing of the vast chasm in Sino-American relations. The remaining gap is closing rapidly, more rapidly than anticipated in the most sanguine of expectations a year ago.

In retrospect, it is clear that the warm reaction at home to the President's initiative indicated that the nation had long-since been ready for a new look at the situation. What the President supplied was the missing ingredient--the political courage to acknowledge that we had been on the wrong track.

From the outset, Congress has supported the President's initiative. The visits of the joint Senate leadership and of the House leaders to China shortly after the President's return underscored the cohesiveness of the Executive and Legislative Branches on this issue. I should note in passing that long before Dr. Kissinger's visit, there had been exchanges between the White House and the Senate leadership with regard to the desirability of re-establishing communications with Peking. In fact, the joint effort to open the door began with the first private meeting between the President and the Senate Democratic Leader at the outset of his first Administration, in fact, in the first month.

The President, however, had to be and has been the key figure in this development. He had to put before the entire nation a revised estimate of the new China. He had to shift ritualized attitudes by 180° and he did so, in my judgment, with consummate skill.

Where, then, does Congress fit into the situation? It can scarcely be said that while the Executive Branch was pursuing the policy of ostracism, "a hundred flowers bloomed" in the Senate on the China issue. For the most part, Congress was content to ride the policy. Here and there, however, individual Members and the Foreign Relations and other Committees did make contributions to recasting public understanding and attitudes. In March 1968, five years ago in a lecture at the University of Montana, I expressed the view that

"the basic adjustment which is needed in policies respecting China is to make crystal clear that this government does not anticipate, much less does it seek, the overthrow of the government on the Chinese mainland. In addition, there is a need to

end the discrimination which consigns to China an inferior status as among the Communist countries in this nation's policies respecting travel and trade. Finally, it ought to be made unequivocal that we are prepared at all times to meet with Chinese representatives--formally or informally--in order to consider differences between China and the United States over Viet Nam or any other question of common concern."

The transition in policy during the last year or so has followed this pattern closely and the transition has had support from the Senate, almost to a man. In due course, I am confident Members of both parties and both Houses will join the expanding ranks of travellers to China. In so doing, they will familiarize themselves first-hand with the situation and, hence, sharpen their understanding of unfolding developments. The glowing reports of heretofore skeptical newspaper columnists who have recently visited China indicate that such visits can serve more effectively as eye-openers than what is usually served for that purpose at the bar of the

National Press Club. China is, indeed, heady stuff and it is most desirable that, as we proceed with the rapprochement, we open our minds with understanding and prudence.

It seems to me that the time is approaching for Congress, to supplement a general support of the President's initiatives on China with substantive legislative action. The 93rd Congress is just getting underway, and it can make a most useful contribution by wiping the statutory slate clean of the anti-Chinese legislation of the past two decades.

The Formosa Resolution, for example, remains on the books. It is a post-dated check which, for all practical purposes, gives a Congressional endorsement to the unfettered use of the U.S. Armed Forces to assist the Chinese National forces on Taiwan. Under the terms of the Resolution, the question of how and when to use these forces is left to the sole discretion of the Executive Branch. Whatever its original validity and, in retrospect, it was a dubious one at best, the Formosa Resolution is out of keeping with the policy which the

President is now pursuing in regard to the People's Republic of China. Even if that were not the case, I must express grave reservations with regard to all blank-checks drawn on the "war-and-peace" powers of the Congress. The Formosa Resolution is reminiscent, for example, of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution which 'greased' the way for the Executive Branch to slide into the military involvement in Viet Nam. If we have learned anything from that experience, it ought to be that the initiation of the massive use of force by the United States at the sole discretion of one branch of government is a perilous Constitutional practice.

The Formosa Resolution was originally designed for an emergency, almost as a personal accommodation to President Eisenhower; it has remained on the statute books to sustain what is now a discarded policy on China. In 1971 the Foreign Relations Committee voted to repeal the Resolution. This action was rejected in the Senate at the time by a vote of 43-40. It is time, again, it seems to me, to put the matter before the Congress.

For many years, this nation helped to sustain the fiction that Taiwan spoke for the hundreds of millions in China. In support of that fiction, the United States funnelled five billion dollars in military and economic aid into an island whose population at the outset of this policy was less than ten million. This financial stimulus produced spectacular economic results. It also served to pay for an over-sized, highly mechanized Army and to keep alive the hope of the National Government that these forces would one day spearhead a return to the Chinese mainland. That hope has all but disappeared in Taiwan; so, too, have the fears of a military invasion from the Mainland.

Economic aid to Taiwan has now been discontinued. Spurred by great inputs of capital, in particular, from the United States and Japan, the modernized economy of Taiwan is actually in a position to extend aid to less-developed countries in Asia, Africa, and elsewhere. Still flowing into the island, however, is U.S. military aid in the form of hardware and

advisers on how to use it. The United States maintains, on Taiwan, a military advisory group of 165 officers and men. In addition, more than 8,000 members of the armed forces are also there in connection with activities related to Viet Nam.

The deployment of this large force is obsolete in view of the Vietnamese truce and I am confident that the Congress will concur in a decision to withdraw it. The President and the Congress, moreover, can and should work together to bring about the termination of the military aid mission which remains as a vestige of our past involvement in the Chinese civil war.

In addition, it should be noted that over \$100 million in military grant aid and credit sales for Taiwan were requested of Congress for the current fiscal year. It is difficult to see the sense in continuing to give away tens of millions of U.S. dollars in this fashion. As long as we continue to provide military aid and advisors to Taiwan, we remain imbedded in what we have now recognized to be an internal

Chinese affair. There is every reason to assume that Taiwan's armed forces are capable of defending themselves. In any event, it is hard to believe that a U.S. aid program any longer constitutes the margin for survival. Ways must be found for preserving the stability of regions of the South China Seas other than for this nation to continue to arm a small segment of Chinese people on the island of Taiwan against the rest.

Although the winds of change are sweeping away past policies throughout Asia, still intact is the ring of peripheral anti-Chinese treaties. From the outset, it seems to me, the tacit assumption of these treaties is that the United States is an Asia power, which it is not, with a prime responsibility for influencing and controlling change on the Asian mainland. It is an assumption which flowed effortlessly from the decisive role of the United States in the defeat of Japan in World War II. It is an assumption which is twenty-five years old and needs to be examined afresh.

The United States is, and will continue to be, a nation with vast interests and responsibilities in the Pacific, interests which extend to the western reaches of the ocean. These interests, however, do not compel us to continue to maintain, as we do, 260,000 armed men on the mainland and off-shore islands of the Asian continent. In a time of spreading peace, forces of this magnitude appear unrelated to any valid interests of the United States. On the contrary, they seem more an expensive residue of the predominant U.S. power which the United States asserted in that region at the end of World War II.

We need to be aware that such residues do not come cheaply. They are paid for--the people of the nation pay for them--at a rate of many billions of dollars each year. Expenditures of this kind have something to do with the rising cost of food at home and the astronomical dollar price of hotel accommodations in Tokyo or Hong Kong. I reiterate this theme because there is a tendency to ignore the cost factors which are involved in anachronistic displays of our military power abroad and the

relationship of this cost to the debilitated state of the economy. The presence of the flag on the beaches of Asia may be as thrilling a sight as its appearance on the moon. In both cases, however, the thrill carries a very high price. There is no national interest which requires us to maintain every major U.S. power-core abroad simply because there may have once been a vital use for it.

In my judgment, the time has long been here for a deliberate phase-out of all American installations and forces which remain on the Asian mainland. The 40,000 plus U.S. troops in Korea are largely an irrelevant luxury, twenty years after the end of the Korean war. In the same category are the 45,000 U.S. forces in Thailand. So, too, are many of the U.S. bases and installations in Japan.

Treaties are not chiseled in stone; much less are executive agreements. The Defense treaty with the Republic of China on Taiwan obviously needs to be re-examined in the light of the President's initiative with regard to Peking. In a

similar vein, the SEATO Treaty has shown itself to be, in view of the involvement in Indochina, not merely an inconsequential relic of the past, but a devastatingly costly enterprise and a positive hazard to the interests of this nation.

One of the justifications for the SEATO Treaty-- which, in passing, I should note, I signed at the request of President Eisenhower in Manila nineteen years ago--one of the justifications for SEATO was the high hopes that it would lead in time to collective security and regional cooperation in Asia. That hope never got off the ground, and, in my judgment, the tragic war in Indochina has now delivered a coup-de-grace to this empty pact, a view which appears to be shared by virtually all of the other signatories.

Both treaties should be re-examined as part of a through, in-depth review of our overall position in the Western Pacific which derives from many treaties, agreements, and practices. It is to be hoped that the Commission on the Organization of the Government for the Conduct of Foreign Policy and

the Foreign Relations Committee will pursue intensive studies of the status of these treaties and other commitments in Asia, and elsewhere, during the current Congress.

Until the Taiwan situation is clarified, we shall probably find ourselves looking primarily to trade and other exchanges for the cement of relations with the new China. The liaison offices--extraordinary edifices--which will open soon in Washington and Peking will facilitate this process. Both countries are carrying out the pledge of the Shanghai communique, re-emphasied in the February 22 communique, to broaden mutual understanding through contacts and exchanges. From my own experience in China last year, I am persuaded that this personal interaction can be of great significance.

There is much to be learned from the culture of the old China. There is much, too, to be learned from the innovations and practices of the new China. From accupuncture to the recycling of human waste, health, pollution, across the

spectrum of the current concerns of Americans--there is much to be learned from the People's Republic. The Chinese will learn, too, from us in science, in technology and the arts.

The cross-fertilization of human experiences has been resumed between China and the United States. The educational interchange has begun anew. This time the exchanges are on the basis of equality. This time the exchanges can bring mutual and durable benefit to both peoples. Last year, more than 1,000 Americans--doctors, professors, journalists, scientists, businessmen, and political leaders--visited China. Four groups of Chinese have now come to see us and to show us. I am confident that the two-way flow will accelerate with time.

Exchanges cost a great deal of money. I am informed, for example, that a three-week tour of China by the Philadelphia Orchestra could cost about \$350,000, even with the Chinese paying all in-country costs. The amounts are large even though they are insignificant when compared with the waste which still attaches to the pursuit of our foreign and military policies in and around the rim of Asia.

It would be my expectation that funds for cultural exchange with China could be made available out of savings in these areas. Indeed, one of the contributions which can be made by Congress is to assert budgetary priorities that will bring about such a shift. Small investments in exchanges by both countries, can pay rich dividends in mutual understanding, friendly contact and cultural enrichment.

A special responsibility devolves on the Congress in the field of trade with China. Good trading relations mean good foreign relations and especially at this time. The Chinese

have a record of scrupulously living up to agreements to which they put their signatures, whether sales contracts or political settlements.

China's needs from abroad have been deliberately restrained. In the past decade or more, the Chinese have looked to their own resources for economic building blocks, concentrating on developing a largely self-contained productive capacity. Such foreign trade as there is remains governed by two basic principles: (1) equality and mutual benefit, and (2) exchange of what China has in surplus for what is lacking. As a general practice, a rough balance is maintained between imports and exports. Hence, China has no external debts of any consequence.

As economic development accelerates, there may be changes in the Chinese approach to trade relations with the outside world. For the present, however, no sudden change is to be expected. Because the doors to America's warehouses have at last been unsealed does not mean that Chinese traders will

rush to enter and such bill boards as there are in China are not available for the advertising of foreign products. They are used, rather, to stress Chinese effort in production even as they urge restraint in Chinese consumption.

China's foreign trade is small. In 1972 the total was estimated to be \$5 billion, roughly balanced between imports and exports. That amounts to a trade turnover of less than one-half of one percent of our gross national product.

U. S. trade with China has responded promptly to the removal of the embargo by President Nixon. At the Canton trade fair last fall, for example, there were 75 American businessmen, twice the number attending the spring fair. From \$5 million in 1971, U. S.-China trade increased to \$92 million last year; \$60 million in exports to China, primarily of farm products, and \$23 million in imports from China. Exports to China could reach \$350 million this year, with the shipment of Boeing 707s and the sale of large amounts of cotton and other farm products.

Even the most optimistic observers, however, do not believe China's exports to the United States will exceed \$50 million this year.

Part of the disparity derives from U. S. tariff discrimination against Chinese imports. Until caught up in the frenzy of cold war, traditional trade policy was to give most-favored-nation treatment to imports from all countries, regardless of politics. But twenty-two years ago, the Chinese mainland, along with other Communist countries, was denied that treatment.

The President has now negotiated a trade agreement with the Soviet Union providing for most-favored-nation treatment. There is no reason whatsoever to do less, in my judgment, with regard to Peking. It has been estimated that about 50 percent of China's exports to the United States are affected by lack of most-favored-nation treatment. The present gross trade imbalance with China cannot continue indefinitely.

Either Chinese purchases here will drop or more will have to be bought from China or new multi-angular patterns of trade will have to be encouraged in the Western Pacific.

It would be my hope that Congress will provide authority to negotiate a most-favored-nation arrangement with China along the lines of the recent agreement with the Soviet Union. Such an arrangement could be consummated, notwithstanding the absence of formal diplomatic relations. I should note that with regard to the Soviet Union, the pending trade-agreement is now clouded by the Mills-Jackson amendment which relates to the emigration payments required of Soviet Jews seeking to go to Israel. That should not deter Congressional action on most-favored-nation treatment for China. The two situations are not analogous and it would be most unfortunate to lose momentum which has been generated in the Sino-U. S. rapprochement over what is an unrelated issue in Europe.

In closing, I would reiterate that a China policy based on myth and self-deception has been a major factor in the atmosphere of crises in which we have lived since the end of World War II. Before the Nixon Administration neither the Executive Branch nor the Congress did very much to rectify our relationship with the new China. The President's initiative in going to Peking has brought us, at last, to grips with this neglected situation. It remains for the Legislative Branch, now, to take action to remove the accumulated legal barnacles of the past. In so doing, Congress will join tangibly with the President in normalizing our relations with the Chinese People's Republic.

In doing so, moreover, Congress will contribute to the improvement of the prospects for peace in the Western Pacific and in the world. There is no doubt that what happens in and around China forms an enormous segment of those prospects even though China eschews the label "Great Power." Chinese society, today, is strong and unified perhaps as never

before in history. It has a dynamism based on a "one for all and all for one" concept. "Serve the people" is more than a slogan, it is a national way of life. To visit China is to feel, personally, the vitality of a vast, intelligent and highly competent people and the social enthusiasm which has been generated by their new society. The visible differences between China today and twenty years ago are stupendous. The invisible differences may even be greater. All indications are that the next ten years are likely to add enormously to what has already been achieved.

We are entered on a new era of relations with China. We cannot wipe the slate of the past clean and start afresh. Neither political nor personal relationships are so forgiving. Even now, we confront a residue of stumbling blocks from the past, many of which go back to the 19th century in the form of superior-inferior concepts of China. The job of removing these blocks insofar as they derive from official policy and law

rests with the President and the Congress. In a deeper sense, the job is educational. As we proceed to do what must be done, however, the path will open to a new era of stability in the Western Pacific. It will be an era based, not on the military preeminence of any single nation but on the mutual efforts and forbearance of all the concerned nations. There is every reason to expect that the new China will join with us and others in building that kind of a peace in the Pacific, a peace which can be derived through patience, perseverance and perspicacity.